May 18-24, 2018 | vol 23 | number 38

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Photo courtesy of ProPublica/*Frontline* PBS
Design by Richie Beckman

ORANGE FEATHERS »

ONESMALLSQUARE

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RED MEAT

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from the secret files of Max Cannon

Where's your uniform, Dan? I thought you worked double shifts every day of the year
Normally I do, but my boss is making me burn some of the vacation days I've accrued, so I thought I'd come hang with you today
That sounds nice, but I have to be at work in twenty minutes.
Ok. Mind if I come with you? I could watch you do your job
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Already tried that. They gave me fifty bucks to come here

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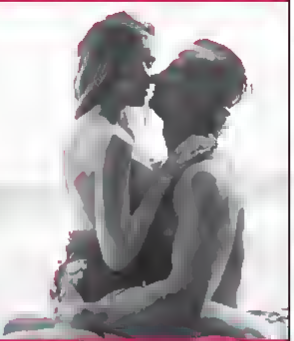

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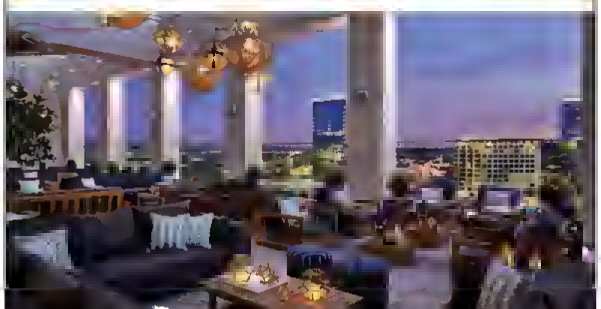

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Sheriff's Orange County Crime Lab murder scandal unfolds in courts

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» R. SCOTT MOXLEY

It took nearly two decades for anyone outside of law enforcement to discover that an Orange County Crime Lab official aided one prosecutor in winning a murder trial with sworn forensic scientific testimony and a year later altered her opinion to help a second deputy DA prevail in a separate capital case without jurors knowing of the switch.

That revelation, which the *Weekly* first reported in 2016, should have alarmed the county's top law-enforcement officials, District Attorney Tony Rackauckas and Sheriff Sandra Hutchens. After all, Rackauckas and Hutchens have taken oaths to act honorably in their powerful government offices. They also describe themselves as guardians of the criminal-justice system.

But Rackauckas and Hutchens, already instigators of a nationally embarrassing jailhouse-informant scandal, are employing a glitch in California's penal code that allows them to hide post-conviction evidence of law-enforcement cheating, even in death-penalty cases. The move helps to keep the public in the dark about the pro-prosecution biases of Mary Hong. With authorities unconcerned about her role in the scandal, Hong nowadays runs crime labs for the California Department of Justice.

The controversy centers on two unrelated 1985 Anaheim rape/murders. Daniel Gammie, the original criminalist on the cases, declared the recovery of low semen and sperm densities in the victims meant the fluids were "not deposited at or near the time of death." Those reports collected dust for nearly two decades until officials charged Lynn Dean Johnson and Wendell Lemond.

At Johnson's 2008 trial, Gammie and Hong testified that the original findings were erroneous because low densities don't necessarily provide an accurate deposit-timing window given significant "variables" in male sperm production, including an individual's age and health. Thus, Hong claimed the deposit occurred "zero to 24 hours" before collection at the crime scene. That flip assisted prosecutor (now judge) Kevin Haskins, who assured jurors the crime lab's expertise was on par with the deeds of "Galileo" and "Copernicus," in winning a conviction.

But just 13 months later, in the same courtroom with the same judge but in the *Lemond* case, Hong flopped on the flip with a jury unaware of her *Johnson* testimony. She vouched for Gammie's original 1985 finding that low sperm densities proved the deposit had been made *more than 24 hours before collection*. Pushing the timeframe back by at least a day pleased prosecutor Howard Gundy, who wanted to clear the story-altering man who left the deposit, Larry Herrera, and nail the government's target, Lemond.

Though DAs and sheriffs typically control crime labs, criminalists ethically aren't supposed to massage evidence to fit cops' and prosecutors' wishes. Plus, expert forensic opinions should be able to withstand scrutiny. However, Hong has been dodging questions from Assistant Public Defender Scott Sanders, who discovered her "scientifically irreconcilable" testimonies in late 2016.

The silence momentarily ended in February, when Bruce Houlihan, the current director of the sheriff's crime lab, emerged for an *Orange County Register* article to absolve Hong without explanation. After Houlihan retreated back into the bureaucracy, Sanders repeatedly asked him to describe what investigation he'd undertaken to make his assertion. He also wants to know what searches were undertaken to determine if wobbling forensic-science stances led to other wrongful convictions and the possibility that actual killers still roam the streets. But Houlihan, who told the *Register* he spends "a lot of time avoiding the perception of bias," won't answer questions.

"The problem for me in terms of the credibility of the crime lab is I have a director that will speak to the prosecution, will speak to the press, but won't speak to me," Sanders said. "[Houlihan] has kind of violated the spirit [of] 'We're not beholden to one side.'"

The battle is now playing out in court. At the California Court of Appeal, Sanders is taking issue with a late-2017 decision by Superior Court Judge Cheri T. Pham, a former Rackauckas aide, to block a new trial for Johnson on timeliness grounds. According to the defense, the recent emergence of serious concerns about Hong's credibility should trigger future proceedings. California Attorney General Xavier Becerra wants to keep the conviction in place and, as he has in the snitch scandal, is fine with continued secrecy surrounding unethical government activities in Orange County.

Meanwhile, a second confrontation is happening inside Superior Court Judge Julian Bailey's Santa Ana courtroom. Sanders wants Houlihan placed under oath to explain his support of Hong's testimonies. Bailey indicated he is contemplating approval.

Such a step wouldn't delight Rackauckas aide Avery Harrison and Hutchens' lawyer, D. Kevin Dunn, who are insisting without supporting documentation that Hong's work in both *Johnson* and *Lemond* is valid. This duo is also using Penal Code 1054.9 to argue Sanders is only entitled to see government records produced up until the date of Johnson's sentencing hearing. They contend a loophole in the law allows the prosecution team to hide evidence surrounding Hong's work in *Lemond* and other information pertaining to her dishonesty that may have been discovered after Johnson's sentencing.

At a mid-April hearing, Harrison told Bailey it was "inappropriate" for him to have compared testimony in the two controversial cases because the law blocks the judge from considering anything that happened after the DA's office won Johnson's conviction, and thus, he shouldn't have looked at "the substantive merits" of the flip-flop.

"The Court of Appeal is in the best, exclusive position to look at the merit of the defense claims," said Harrison. "If they determine there's information that has occurred since the end of the *Johnson* case, that could be qualified as, let's say, 'newly discovered evidence,' then they have the authority and jurisdiction to hold an evidentiary hearing."

Dunn posed even more aggressively, implying it makes common sense for government officials, such as those in a sheriff's crime lab, to enjoy secrecy when they've engaged in "an internal process that an agency might undertake to ensure the quality of its work."

The comment jolted Bailey. He inquired, "What if that [hidden government analysis] turns up exculpatory evidence?"

A rambling Dunn didn't retreat. The sheriff's lawyer boldly created an alternative reality, inexplicably saying all courts agree Hong gave consistent testimony.

"Let me stop you there," the judge fired back. "There haven't been any findings by any court that that [is] the case."

The parties are expected to resume battle in Bailey's court on May 21.

RSCOTTMOXLEY@OCWEEKLY.COM

Dems vs. Dems

» MATT COKER

Dana Watch previously exposed some of the intrigue involving 48th congressional district incumbent Dana Rohrabacher (R-Putin's erector set) and his Republican rivals Scott Baugh, a former protegé, and Paul Martin, who is endorsed by the Russian leader's great foe, chess champion Garry Kasparov.

But there are also plenty of machinations on the Democratic side of the June primary ballot, from which the two top vote-getters from any party will advance to the November general election.

EDIE AUI

Fearing those two candidates could be Republicans, the California and Orange County Democratic parties recently endorsed Hans Keirstead for the 48th seat. The Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC) and Indivisible 48, the local chapter of the Donald Trump resistance group, went on to back Harley Rouda.

Last week, the campaigns for the deep-pocketed Democrats—Keirstead is a nationally known stem-cell researcher, and Rouda is a successful businessman—one-upped each other with competing announcements about positive polls, new endorsements and backing from sitting officeholders. Also arriving last week was criticism from the state and local Democratic Party brass of the DCCC, the national PAC dedicated to flipping the House from red to blue.

In a statement posted on the California Democratic Party (CDP) website, chairman Eric Bauman acknowledges that the DCCC and his organization have coordinated efforts against Republican incumbents, but ... "Throughout our partnership, I have been consistently clear on one key point: When CDP delegates endorse a candidate, that candidate is the official candidate of the party," states Bauman, "and the DCCC should tread carefully in openly supporting a different candidate."

He added he has communicated to the DCCC that undercutting candidates endorsed by the CDP can be "extraordinarily counterproductive."

"The DCCC certainly has a different set of considerations in making their decisions," Bauman says, "but it is my strong belief that whatever resources they commit to [congressional district] 48 should be spent attacking the corrupt and compromised Putin incumbent, Dana Rohrabacher, or his bare-knuckled extremist Republican challenger, Scott Baugh."

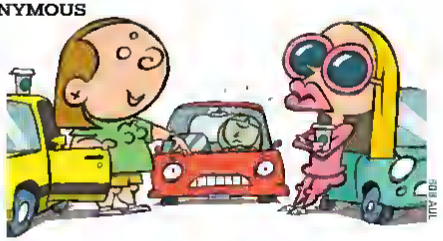
Echoing those sentiments in a statement of her own was Democratic Party of Orange County Chairwoman Fran Sdao: "In light of recent news about DCCC's announced support for Harley Rouda for [the 48th congressional district], I join California Democratic Party chair Eric Bauman's call for DCCC to focus its resources against [the district]'s corrupt incumbent, Dana Rohrabacher, along with his extremist Republican opponent, Scott Baugh."

The DCCC's reaction? Rouda stands a better chance than Keirstead at advancing beyond the June primary to the November general election.

Got Dana Watch fodder? Email mcoker@ocweekly.com.

HeyYou!

» ANONYMOUS



TONY AUI

Parking-Lot Play Date

To the ladies who decided to have a little play date near my car in the school drop-off zone: Are you serious? Mom 1 left both doors on the driver's side open while she and her two youngest visited with Mom 2 beside my rear bumper, and then Mom 3 pulled up, blocking me in while the three moms chatted and their little ones hopped and spun around behind my car, which was parked in a busy school lot during drop-off. It's not a playground, ladies!

HEY, YOU! Send anonymous thanks, confessions or accusations—changing or deleting the names of the guilty and innocent—to "Hey, You!" c/o *OC Weekly*, 18475 Bandilier Circle, Fountain Valley CA 92708, or email us at letters@ocweekly.com.

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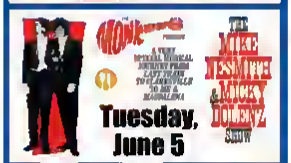

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THE HATE BRIGADE

Produced by journalists with ProPublica, a nonprofit investigative news operation, and Frontline, *the PBS documentary series, this report focuses on Atomwaffen Division, a neo-Nazi group with a direct link to Orange County. County prosecutors have charged Atomwaffen member Samuel Woodward, 20, with the January murder of Blaze Bernstein, 19, a gay Jewish college student whose body was buried in Borrego Park in Foothill Ranch. Both men attended Santa Ana's Orange County School of the Arts.*

The 18-year-old, excited by his handiwork at the bloody rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, last summer, quickly went online to boast. He used the handle VasillistheGreek.

"Today cracked 3 skulls open with virtually no damage to myself," the young man wrote on Aug. 12, 2017.

Vasillios Pistolis had come to the now-infamous Unite the Right rally eager for such violence. He belonged to a white supremacist group known as Atomwaffen Division, a secretive neo-Nazi organization whose members say they are preparing for a coming race war in the U.S. In online chats leading up to the rally, Pistolis had been encouraged to be vicious with any counterprotesters, maybe even sodomize someone with a knife. He'd responded by saying he was prepared to kill someone "if shit goes down."

One of Pistolis' victims that weekend was Emily Gorcenski, a data scientist and trans woman from Charlottesville who had shown up to confront the rally's hundreds of white supremacists. In an online post, Pistolis delighted in how he had "drop kicked" that "tranny" during a violent nighttime march on the campus of the University of Virginia. He also wrote about a blood-soaked flag he'd kept as a memento. "Not my blood," he took care to note.

At the end of the weekend that shocked much of the country, Pistolis returned to his everyday life: serving in the U.S. Marine Corps.

Of the many white supremacist organizations that have sprung up in the past few years, Atomwaffen is among the more extreme, espousing the overthrow of the U.S. government through acts of political violence and guerrilla warfare.

Journalists with ProPublica and *Frontline* gained insight into Atomwaffen's ideology, aims and membership after obtaining seven months of messages from a confidential chat room used by the group's members. The chat logs, as well as interviews with a former member, reveal Atomwaffen has attracted a mixture of young men—fans of fringe heavy-metal music, a private investigator, firearms aficionados—living in more than 20 states.

But a number of them are current or former members of the U.S. military. ProPublica and *Frontline* have identified three Atomwaffen members or associates who are currently employed by the Army or Navy. Another three served in the armed forces in the past. Pistolis, who remains an active-duty Marine, left Atomwaffen in a dispute in late 2017 and joined up with another white supremacist group. Reporters made the identifications through dozens of interviews, a range of social media and other online posts, and a review of the 250,000 confidential messages obtained earlier this year.

Joshua Beckett, who trained Atomwaffen members in firearms and hand-to-hand combat last fall, served in the Army from 2011 to 2015, according to service records. Online, Beckett, 26, has said that he worked as a combat engineer while in the Army; combat engineers are the branch's demolitions experts.

In Atomwaffen chats, Beckett, using the handle Johann Donarsson, said he

»CONTINUED ON PAGE 10

WOODWARD (RIGHT) WITH A FELLOW ATOMWAFFEN MEMBER

THE HATE BRIGADE

» FROM PAGE 9

was building assault rifles and would happily construct weapons for his fellow members. "Give me the parts and the receiver, and I'll get it all together for you," Beckett wrote in August 2017.

Beckett also wrote about suffering from post-traumatic stress disorder as a result of combat in Afghanistan, as well as how his time in uniform caused him to radically revise his political beliefs, prompting him to abandon mainstream conservatism in favor of National Socialism.

In online discussions, Beckett encouraged Atomwaffen members to enlist in the military, so as to become proficient in the use of weaponry, and then turn their expertise against the U.S. government, which he believed to be controlled by a secret cabal of Jews. "The Army itself woke me up to race, and the war woke me up to the Jews," Beckett wrote, adding, "The U.S. military gives great training. ... You learn how to fight—and survive."

Another Atomwaffen member used the chats to talk about the combat he saw during the U.S. troop surge in Afghanistan. "I was in the infantry in the Army in Afghanistan and did a lot of ... shit," the member wrote. He said the Army wanted him to become a chemical weapons specialist, but he chose to join the infantry. He spent his time, he wrote, blasting "lead into sand niggers."

ProPublica and *Frontline* specifically identified Pistolis and Beckett through interviews with a former Atomwaffen member who knew them, the group's internal records and the men's digital footprints. In his online activities, Pistolis left many clues to his identity, including pictures of himself he uploaded to private white supremacist chat rooms and his public Facebook page. Beckett's internet handles and Facebook content also helped us to confirm him as the man who had spent five years in the Army before joining Atomwaffen.

Reporters contacted Beckett via phone and Facebook messages but did not get a response. Beckett's Facebook page features an image of Donald Trump driving a white convertible emblazoned with the number 1488, a white supremacist code, and a call for whites to jump in the car.

In a series of phone and email exchanges, Pistolis claimed he did not attend the Charlottesville rally and did not assault Gorcenski or anyone else. His online messages about Gorcenski, he said, were nothing more than jokes. He admitted to harboring "alt-right" or white supremacist beliefs, though he claimed he had "infiltrated" Atomwaffen on behalf of another extremist group and was never actually a member.

Pistolis, who indicated to reporters that he is stationed in North Carolina, pulled down his personal Twitter account shortly after being contacted by ProPublica and *Frontline*. He also took down his account on Gab, a discussion channel favored by white supremacists, many of whom have been banned from Twitter and other social-media platforms. His postings indicate that after leaving Atomwaffen last November—other members accused him of risking unwanted attention for the group by showing up with an Atomwaffen flag at a rally in Tennessee—he became an active participant in online forums involving the Traditionalist Workers Party, another neo-Nazi group.

Since May 2017, three people involved with Atomwaffen have been charged with five murders. Devon Arthurs, 20, an early Atomwaffen recruit, is facing trial for allegedly murdering two other members of the group in Florida. A teenager in Virginia stands accused of killing his ex-girlfriend's parents, who had tried to keep their daughter away from him, the 17-year-old, who was in the process of joining Atomwaffen, is being tried as a juvenile. Atomwaffen member Samuel Woodward, 20, has pleaded not guilty in the slaying of Blaze Bernstein, a gay, Jewish college student whose body was discovered in a Southern California park early this year. Authorities believe Woodward stabbed Bernstein more than 20 times.

Despite the mounting body count, it is unclear just how aggressive law enforcement—at the federal or local level—has been in investigating the group. None of the men charged in the homicides had a military background.

The FBI had no comment when asked about Atomwaffen.

One Atomwaffen member caught up in a high-profile criminal case has a quite direct link to the armed forces.

Atomwaffen's founder, Brandon Russell, 22, was arrested last year after investigators discovered a cache of weapons, detonators and volatile chemical compounds in his home, including a cooler full of HMTD, a powerful explosive often used by bomb-makers, and ammonium nitrate, the substance used by Timothy McVeigh in the Oklahoma City attack. Russell was also in possession of two radioactive isotopes, americium and thorium. In September 2017, he pleaded guilty to a single charge of unlawful possession of explosives and was later sentenced to five years in federal prison.

At the time of his arrest, Russell, 22, had been serving in the 53rd Brigade Special Troops Battalion of Florida's Army National Guard. A spokesman for the Marine Corps, Major Brian Block, said the corps would be looking into Pistolis and would likely open a formal probe into his activities last summer.

"There is no place for racial hatred or extremism in the Marine Corps," Block said in a written statement. "Bigotry and racial extremism run contrary to our core values."

He added, "The guidance to Marines is clear. Participation in supremacist or extremist organizations or activities is a violation of Department of Defense and Marine Corps orders" and can lead to expulsion from the service.

Contacted by ProPublica and *Frontline*, Carla Gleason, a Department of Defense spokesperson and Air Force major, said the military relies on its commanders to identify problematic activities and respond judiciously. "What we're doing is empowering commanders at every level to counsel service members on their conduct and take disciplinary action where appropriate.

"We do recognize the right to free speech and thought," Gleason continued, adding that the Department of Defense insists that service members observe the military's policies prohibiting discrimination and extremist behavior.

ProPublica and *Frontline* documented Pistolis' role in Charlottesville through an analysis of photos and video footage from the rally, as well as his own online admissions, including a statement Pistolis posted to an Atomwaffen chat room saying he "kicked Emily gorcenski" during the march at the University of Virginia. ProPublica and *Frontline* contacted the University of Virginia Police Department to check the accuracy of the material involving Pistolis at the Unite the Right rally, and to see if there was an investigation underway. Sergeant Casey Acord reviewed the material and later said his agency would investigate Pistolis' apparent role in the melee that occurred during the torch-lit march on school property.

Reporters also showed pictures, video and chat posts to Gorcenski, the activist attacked in Charlottsville. While she didn't suffer any significant physical injuries that night, the experience, Gorcenski said, was profoundly traumatizing—and she has faced frequent harassment from fascists and white supremacists since the rally. She said she plans to move out of the country.

Gorcenski quickly identified Pistolis as the man who kicked her.

"He's telling the truth in these logs about what happened," she said.

As with many white supremacist groups, Atomwaffen initially coalesced in cyberspace—the founders and early members met one another through a fascist discussion forum called Iron March, which is now defunct. But in the past few years, the organization—it is estimated to have 80 to 100 members—has moved into the real world.

Atomwaffen has conducted weapons and other training exercises in at least four states, according to the chat logs and interviews. Current and former members of the military have found that their skills are highly valued by Atomwaffen and have assumed leadership roles within the group. Drawing on their battlefield experience, Marines and soldiers have helped to shape the group into a loose collection of armed cells, according to the chat logs and people with direct knowledge of the organization.

THEY CAN TAKE OUR MONEY. THEY CAN TAKE OUR JOBS. THEY CAN EVEN TAKE OUR RIGHTS...
BUT THEY CANNOT TAKE OUR HATRED!
THE ATOMWAFFEN DIVISION

There has long been a worrisome, if not fully understood, nexus between the military and the white supremacist movement. Over the past half-century, many of the movement's key leaders have come from the ranks of the military, including George Lincoln Rockwell, commander of the American Nazi Party; Ku Klux Klan leader Louis Beam; and Aryan Nations founder Richard Butler.

Pete Simi, co-author of the book *American Swastika* and an associate professor at Chapman University, said white supremacists often draw inspiration from the armed forces. "Extremist culture tends to be paramilitary—the Klan, for instance, is a clearly paramilitary organization, it was started by former military officers," said Simi. "A lot of traditional neo-Nazi groups tend to emulate military structure. . . . Some skinhead groups do that as well."

Organizations such as Atomwaffen, he said, "need military people who have explosives experience, firearms experience, combat fighting experience" that they can pass on to other members. But there's also another factor, in Simi's view. "I think there's also a credibility aspect to it, in that it gives more credibility to the group to have people who served in the U.S. military. It brings a certain gravitas."

Last year, nearly 25 percent of active-duty service members surveyed by the *Military Times* said they'd encountered white nationalists within the ranks. The publication polled more than 1,000 service members.

The results are jarring in a number of ways, not least because each branch of the armed forces has regulations that bar service members from joining white supremacist organizations. Army policy, for example, forbids soldiers from participating in "extremist groups" that foster "racial, gender, or ethnic hatred or intolerance." The Marine Corps has a similar regulation, Order 1900.16, which mandates swift penalties for Marines caught engaging in "extremist or supremacist activities."

Air Force directives note that airmen who participate in racist organizations can face court martial for disobedience.

For Simi, a key question is whether the Department of Defense and various military branches are effectively enforcing these policies by screening volunteers as they enter the service and thoroughly investigating reports of extremist activity by service members. If the figures in the *Military Times* survey "are anywhere close to credible, then there's clearly a problem that isn't being addressed," Simi said.

A former Marine who currently works for a government intelligence agency told ProPublica and *Frontline* that the military's seriousness about combating white supremacists in its ranks can vary. "At the command level—and publicly—the military takes any extremism seriously," the ex-Marine said. "There is a zero-tolerance policy regarding Nazis. We defeated them in World War II, and they have no business currently serving in the U.S. military."

"At the unit level, I believe there's a willful ignorance," the former Marine added. "'If neo-Nazis aren't allowed to enlist in the military, and if nobody I know is a neo-Nazi, there must not be any within my unit' seems to be the standard. It's difficult to take seriously that which you don't believe exists."

Pistolis appears to have gotten involved in the neo-Nazi movement long before he joined the armed forces. In online conversations with members of Atomwaffen, Pistolis said he'd started hanging around with the National Socialist Movement "and other skinheads" when he was 16. He listed some of his favorite books. *Mein Kampf* was one; the autobiography of American Nazi Party leader George Lincoln Rockwell was another. A third was *The Turner Diaries*, the notorious 1978 novel about race war in America that inspired McVeigh, the Oklahoma City bomber.

Pistolis said in the chats he was also a fan of *Siege*, a 563-page tome preaching the virtues of assassination, political terrorism and guerrilla warfare against the U.S. government that has become something of a bible for Atomwaffen members.

After joining Atomwaffen, Pistolis took on a leadership role in the summer of 2017, running the North Carolina cell and vetting new recruits to the group, according to the chat messages as well as a former member.

Before the Unite the Right rally, Pistolis—who is slim with dark, close-cropped hair and a distinctive widow's peak—sketched out designs for two flags he wanted to bring to the event. One was yellow and black and featured a coiled snake poised to strike and the logo of the Golden Dawn, a Greek fascist party linked to murders and violence in that country. On the other flag, he blended the stars-and-bars of the Confederate battle flag with the Sonnenrad, a circular emblem used by the

» CONTINUED ON PAGE 12

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8pm-Close *Shebeen Bar*
Mando Cordova 7pm-Close *DBN Lounge*

FRIDAY 5/18
Nick Hernendez 9pm-Close *Shebeen Bar*
DJ Blunk 9pm-Close *DBN Lounge*

SATURDAY 5/19
Andrew Bloom 9PM Close
Shebeen Bar
DJ BB Guns 9pm-Close
DBN Lounge

SUNDAY 5/20
Jazz Brunch w/Max Bennett
1pm- 3pm *Shebeen Bar*
Einstein Brown 5pm 7:30pm *Shebeen Bar*
Upstream 7:30pm-Close *Shebeen Bar*
Francois Dean 6pm-Close
DBN Lounge

WEDNESDAY 5/23
The Papermoon Gypsys 8pm-Close
Shebeen Bar

THURSDAY 5/24
Andrew Bloom 9PM Close
Shebeen Bar
Mando Cordova 7pm-Close *DBN Lounge*

FRIDAY 5/25
The Trip 9pm-Close *Shebeen Bar*
DJ Blunk 9pm-Close *DBN Lounge*

SATURDAY 5/26
The Rumors* 9PM-Close *Shebeen Bar*
**Ticketed Event, Purchase at MozambiqueOc.com/Rumors*
DJ BB Guns 9pm-Close *DBN Lounge*

SUNDAY 5/27
Jazz Brunch w/Mando Cordova
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Francois Dean 6pm-Close
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THE HATE BRIGADE

» FROM PAGE 11

Nazis and adopted by the new generation of white supremacists.

Pistolis paid a company to manufacture the flags and shared a picture of them online in a private chat room for people attending the rally; the chat logs were obtained by Unicorn Riot, a leftist media collective.

Over a span of roughly two months, Pistolis posted at least 82 messages in the chat room, which was hosted by Discord, an online messaging service aimed at video gamers.

His views were quite clear. Charlottesville Vice-Mayor Wes Bellamy, who is African-American, was a "monkey" in a fancy suit. He shared photos of Bellamy and Charlottesville Mayor Michael Signer, who is Jewish, captioned with the words, "Niggers, Jews ... Bad News."

In Charlottesville, Pistolis, wearing a black-and-white Adidas tracksuit, was among the hundreds of torch-bearing young men who marched onto the campus of the University of Virginia after sunset on Aug. 11 while chanting "blood and soil," a slogan of the Third Reich, and performing straight-arm Nazi salutes. Photos and video from that night show Pistolis participating in the event.

The march ended at a monument to Thomas Jefferson, where the white supremacists were met by a small group of anti-fascist counterprotesters, many of them students, who had gathered at the foot of the statue. There was pushing and punching. Pistolis ran through the crowd and launched a flying kick at Gorcenski.

"He traveled here from out of state with the intent to do violence," said Gorcenski. "His own statements match up perfectly to what's happened.

"The military is supposed to protect American civilians and here we see that our soldiers are attacking American civilians—and celebrating it."

The melee that night immediately intensified, as white supremacists bludgeoned the counterprotesters with lit torches and streams of pepper spray shot in all directions. Dozens of men attacked the anti-fascists.

Pistolis was front and center, according to his post. He told his fellow Atomwaffen members how to spot him in videos of the altercation that were popping up on YouTube. "If you see a guy in a tracksuit, that's me," Pistolis wrote.

Another Atomwaffen member reminded Pistolis that he could face a court martial if he were arrested for brawling. "So don't get caught doing stupid shit," wrote the Atomwaffen member, an Army soldier.

The day after the torch march, Pistolis was fighting again, this time in the streets surrounding Charlottesville's Emancipation Park. He was carrying one of the flags he'd had specially made for the rally and wearing a black baseball cap, combat boots and a T-shirt with the stylized skull logo of the Punisher, the comic-book vigilante.

At least two photos taken by a Getty Images photographer capture him smashing a counterprotester with the wooden flagpole.

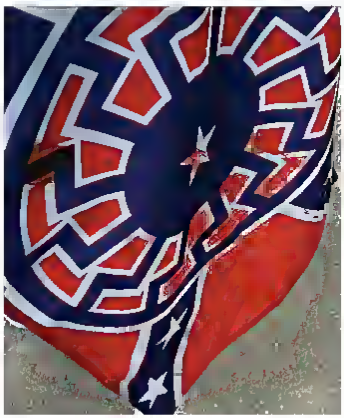
Later, Pistolis shared a photo of the aftermath with his friends in Atomwaffen. The blue-and-red flag was splattered with blood. He said he'd "cracked a skull" and left "three motherfuckers bleeding."

Another member asked if he could share the "bloody flag" picture on Atomwaffen's Twitter account.

About a month after the rally, Pistolis got into an online conversation with an Atomwaffen member from Virginia. Unite the Right was "so much fun," the Virginia man wrote.

Pistolis promptly uploaded two photos of himself from that weekend.

"I can confir[m]," he wrote.



POSTSCRIPT

Since this story was initially published online on May 3, the Naval Criminal Investigative Service has confirmed that it has opened a probe into Pistolis. U.S. Representative Keith Ellison (D-Minnesota) urged Defense Secretary James Mattis to investigate Pistolis and his fellow neo-Nazis. Ellison also requested that the Department of Defense provide information to Congress about the military's efforts to discipline white supremacists in its ranks and screen out racial extremists during the enlistment process. He asked the Pentagon to turn over the information by May 21.

Samuel Woodward is expected to return to court in mid-June for a preliminary hearing in the Bernstein murder case. Woodward has pleaded not guilty to a charge of murder that carries a sentencing enhancement for using a deadly weapon, a knife. So far prosecutors have not sought to charge him under the hate crimes law.

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*calendar

tuesday›
"STRAAANGE LOQOODVE!"

RANDALL MICHELSON

fri/05/18

[FOOD & DRINK]

NIGHTTIME DELIGHTS

OC Night Market

If there's one thing that lights up the night more than a bright moon and a sky full of stars, it's a night market! Since it started in San Gabriel Valley in 2012, 626 Night Market has been re-creating the experience of Taiwan's night markets for a variety of Southern California regions, and this weekend, the OC Fairground will once again be lit up by its glory. The event features hundreds of food, merchandise, and arts-and-crafts vendors, games, live music, and a variety of other entertaining attractions. Average attendance is at around 40,000 people per event, so if the attractions of the night market don't light your life, then the faces of the thousands of happy souls who inhabit the night market are sure to do the trick!

OC Night Market at OC Fairgrounds, 88 Fair Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 708-1500 www.ocnightmarket.com. 4 p.m., also Sat.-Sun. $5, children aged 3 and younger, free. —SCOTT FEINBLATT

[ART]

Mapping the Divine

'Cartomancy'

Long before astrology apps and DIY tarot classes became a thing, the semi horoscope was the ultimate divination method in 17th-century Germany, which was characterized as a comprehensive fortune-telling card deck with various symbols and images to grant spiritual guidance to the inquisitive. Long Beach-based tattooer Shay Bredimus has created his own version of the semi horoscope deck, using his signature aesthetic to update the centuries-old original. This beautifully dark, mystical show includes more than 72 pictographs, placing Bredimus' vision on wondrous display

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"Cartomancy: The Semi Horoscope Reimagined by Shay Bredimus" at Long Beach Museum of Art, 2300 E. Ocean Blvd., Long Beach, (562) 439-2119, lbma.org. 11 a.m., also Sat.-Sun. $6-$7, every Thurs., 3-8 p.m., and Fri., free. —AIMEE MURILLO

sat/05/19

[CONCERT]

ROCKING THE BLUES

Doheny Blues Festival

The annual Doheny Blues Festival may go under the radar for the non-blues-obsessed, non-South County-dwelling denizens but the excellent lineup signals immediate attention. Performing today are legends George Thorogood and the Destroyers and Blues Traveler, while Sunday's lineup includes headliners Buddy Guy and Eric Burdon and the Animals, with such talented acts supporting each day as Larkin Poe, Jimmie Vaughan, Eric Gales, Santos y Sinners, Nikki Hill, and Mercedes Moore. In addition to the onstage action, expect a garden variety of attractions, including vendors' amazing food and libations, and parties. This event at the scenic Sea Terrace Park is one that won't allow you to feel blue.

Doheny Blues Festival at Sea Terrace Park, Pacific Coast Hwy. & Niguel Rd., Dana Point, dohenybluesfestival.com. 11 a.m., also Sun. $80-$475. —AIMEE MURILLO

[COMMUNITY EVENTS]

What the Duck!

Duck-a-Thon

Show your support for AltaMed Medical and Dental Group, which offers medical care for the uninsured and underserved, by spending the day at the Huntington Beach Pier, where the organization's annual fundraiser, Duck-a-Thon, launches 3,000 rubber ducks into the ocean at 3 p.m. That sounds like a heap of rubber/plastic, but volunteers diligently rescue all of the little critters. It also offers a full day of events at the vendor festival, including arts and crafts, a kid zone, a food and wine tasting, a silent auction, free health screenings, and music by the Lifeguard Band. The first 60 baby ducks to shore win prizes, with the first-place winner receiving $1,000. So scoop up your bath toys and flock on over!

Duck-a-Thon at Huntington Beach Pier, 315 Pacific Coast Hwy., Huntington Beach, (323) 725-8751, altamedfoundation.org/duck-a-thon. 10 a.m., also Sun. Free; ducks and wine-tasting tickets sold separately. —SR DAVIES

sun/05/20

[FILM]

Jazz Age Joan!

Our Dancing Daughters

The Art Theatre's "Deco Series" continues with a special screening of the 1928 silent film that made Joan Crawford a megastar, *Our Dancing Daughters*. Hosted by John Thomas, the past president of the Art Deco Society of Los Angeles and co-author of *Long Beach Art Deco*, the preshow talk explores set designs and themes from the film, created by iconic production designer Cedric Gibbons, winner of 11 Oscars. Then, settle back and enjoy this provocative and sultry Jazz Age synchronized-sound film (with no audible dialogue) that propelled Crawford into the stratosphere, where she remained for the next quarter century.

Our Dancing Daughters at Art Theatre, 2025 E. Fourth St., Long Beach, (562) 438-5435, www.artheatrelongbeach.com. 11 a.m. $8.50–$11.50. —SARAH DAVIES

[FILM]

La Dolce Cinema

Cinema Italiano: *The Great Beauty*

The jaded, doomed hero of Italian filmmaker Paolo Sorrentino's 2013 *La Grande Bellezza* (*The Great Beauty*) reviews his Fellini-esque flashback of an existence in achingly poetic summary: "The haggard, inconsistent splashes of beauty, and then wretched squalor and miserable humanity." At 65, his vividly recalled life of partying demands accounting and reflection, and in his search for meaning, he slows the sensory stimulation long enough to reconsider the scene. This vivid film in the Bowers Museum's *bellissima* Italian film series was called "delriously alive" by critics.

Cinema Italiano: *The Great Beauty* at Bowers Museum, 2002 N. Main St., Santa Ana, (714) 567-3600, www.bowers.org. 1:30 p.m. $12. —ANDREW TONKOVICH

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mon/05/21

[CONCERT]

Black Us Out

Against Me!

It's high time that Against Me! finally descend upon our fair territory. The thrilling punk quartet are one of the few truly visible mainstream rock groups that wear their politics on their collective black sleeve, both in their lyrics and in practice, from making donations to ACLU and other social-justice causes to being vocal advocates of gender and trans issues in music. Before they make their headlining appearance at Punk Rock Bowling in Las Vegas, enjoy a somewhat-intimate performance from the band.

Against Me! with Chris Farren and Sharp Shock at the Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana, (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com. 8 p.m. $25. —AIMEE MURILLO

tue/05/22

[CONCERT]

Still Can't Get Enough

Depeche Mode

At a time when many '80s groups are enjoying a nostalgia-induced career revival, Depeche Mode are among the few bands from the decade of decadence that never went away. Dave Gahan and company are touring behind *Spirit*, their 14th studio album. The "Enjoy the Silence" rockers continue to spellbind fans with their blend of new wave, dance rock and ale-rock, releasing solid music that stays true to their legacy, yet shows they aren't tapped out of creativity. Following last fall's multinight stint at the Hollywood Bowl, the band kick off the next leg of their Global Spirit tour at Honda Center.

Depeche Mode at the Honda Center, 2695 E. Katella Ave., Anaheim, (714) 704-2500, www.hondacenter.com. 8 p.m. $55–$179.50. —WYOMING REYNOLDS

wed/05/23

[DANCE]

DANCEO FLA MANCHA

A Knight's Quest for a Spanish Princess

Ballet Etudes is Huntington Beach Academy's premier youth ballet company and is a full 501(c)3 nonprofit that invests its donations in providing young dancers the opportunities to learn and study dance. Among the many full-length ballets it performs annually is *The Nutcracker*, but it also showcases wonderful little-known productions, such as this one at the Huntington Beach Public Library. *A Knight's Quest for a Spanish Princess* is a balletic reinterpretation of *Don Quixote*, featuring music from the original. Kiddos are invited to don their favorite royal costumes for this event and to participate in the costume parade after the performance.

Ballet Etudes Presents *A Knight's Quest for a Spanish Princess* at Huntington Beach Public Library Theater, 7111 Talbert Ave., Huntington Beach, (714) 842-4481, balletetudes.com. 4 & 7 p.m. $5. —AIMEE MURILLO

[ART]

Eye for Art

Beyond the Canvas: Man Ray

Man Ray always wanted to be remembered as a painter, but it's his photography that looms largest in art history. "The first Surrealist photographer," noted *The New York Times*. His famous glass tears or women's-torso-as-violin have soaked into the culture, and you'll recognize those images even if you don't know the artist. But there's so much more, of course—he was a world-traveling polymath who shot fashion and commercial work as well as extremely representative portraits of the major Surrealists, and besides his striking paintings, he was responsible for some truly unsettling Surrealist "readymade" sculptures such as "The Gift" or the "Indestructible Object," created to be destroyed once one reached "the limit of endurance." If ever there was an artist appropriate for a lecture titled "Beyond the Canvas," well, here he is.

Beyond the Canvas: Man Ray at Newport Beach Library, 1000 Avocado Ave., Newport Beach, (949) 717-3800; www.newportbeachlibrary.org. 7 p.m. Free. —CHRIS ZIEGLER

thu/05/24

[CONCERT]

Music Meets Machines

Automata Embodied

The thrilling and innovative Experimental Media Performance Lab at UC Irvine presents another one of its immersive, multidisciplinary events that push the boundaries of what music, art and technology can accomplish. Tonight's concert is one that explores music composition, dance and multimedia in a work inspired by computational methods and incorporates improvisational dance movements with music by director Fabio Paolizzo and motion capture and live video design by UCI's own John Crawford. Also contributing to this multisensory experience is Kojiro Umezaki and the Contemporary Music Ensemble.

Automata Embodied at xMPL (Experimental Media Performance Lab), Contemporary Arts Center at UC Irvine, 4002 Mesa Rd., Irvine, (949) 824-2787, www.arts.uci.edu. 8 p.m. Free. —AIMEE MURILLO

[FOOD & DRINK]

GAUNTLET THROWN!

Spring Farm to Fork App-Off

MaxLove Project, an Orange-based nonprofit that provides care and aid to children undergoing cancer treatments, is holding a foodie-approved tasting event and food competition not to be missed. As with your typical *Top Chef* or *Iron Chef* reality-television competition, four chefs face off to create winning dishes starring one ingredient. The exact ingredient will be revealed at the start of the challenge, so competitors will have to rely on their culinary expertise and creativity to score. Along with being a spectator to this thrilling challenge, guests can enjoy food, wine and beer tastings, all for a noble cause.

MaxLove Project's Spring Farm to Fork App-Off at the Lost Bean Organic Coffee & Tea, 3335 Susan St., Costa Mesa, www.maxloveproject.org. 6 p.m. $75. —AIMEE MURILLO

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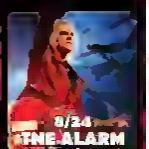

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No Bones About It

Hook & Anchor elevates fast-casual seafood in Newport Beach

BY EDWIN GOEI

Around four years ago, I ate at the exact spot I'm writing about today. I was reviewing a new place that was simultaneously called Biggie Baguette and Quebec Montreal Poutine. The restaurant had two names because it had a split personality; it couldn't decide whether its specialty was sub sandwiches or poutine. The place shuttered about six months later. After that failure came the Beach Barrel, which served burgers, hot dogs and pizzas; that eatery, which I never got around to visiting, lasted about three years.

But as I was researching a new seafood concept called Hook & Anchor, it dawned on me it had the same address.

If all this turnover proves anything, it's that the location is challenging. The mini mall in which Hook & Anchor is the newest tenant is one of the least accessible on the Balboa Peninsula, barely registering in your peripheral vision as you zoom past on Newport Boulevard. Parking spots there have always been scarce, but this fact was recently made worse when the city ripped out all the metered spaces in front of the curb and turned it into a bike lane. And with Lido House Hotel and its restaurant, the Mayor's Table, making a splash across the street, there's even more competition in the area. So I debated whether it was worth trying Hook & Anchor. What good would my review be if the restaurant ended up like its ill-fated predecessors?

But after eating the food, I can safely say that as soon as people discover Hook & Anchor, it will not only do fine, but it will also thrive. As with Slapfish, it's a casual seafood eatery that revels in fish tacos and seafood sandwiches. The po' boys overflow with deep-fried shrimp, soft-shell crab, Guinness-battered cod or oysters. A man was sinking his teeth into one when my order of lobster fries arrived. I heard him whisper to his date, "Look, that's the lobster fries." In his voice was an undercurrent of envy that revealed the regret of not ordering it himself.

He should have. These were fries that finally traded in trendiness for substance. The garlic-and-parmesan-dusted potatoes were crisp, the lobster plentiful and sweet. But it would all be for naught if it weren't for the tangy, house-made lemon-herb Sriracha aioli that cut the richness and lubricated every bite. After I wiped the last drops of it from the bottom of the paper fry basket, I went through my own pangs of regret that I didn't ask for two orders.

Instead, I tucked into the whiteboard special of clams cooked with white wine, shallots, garlic, leeks and butter. The cook had tossed and swirled the shells in a sauté pan in the same kitchen (and presumably the same equipment) that the teenager who assembled my poutine used when the place was Biggie Baguette all those years ago. But when I compared what I devoured now with what I ate then, the difference was like diamonds and coal. Despite being served in a plastic to-go container, these clams would not be out of place at Water Grill.

The man who cooked that dish wore a nicely pressed, professional chef's uniform. Wayne Magnusen is a classically trained Cordon Bleu grad who toiled for eight years at various restaurants before starting a catering business. If you attended the Long Beach Lobster Festival and 626 Night Market, you might have encountered Magnusen's lobster sriracha mac and cheese or his lobster quesadilla, both of which are now offered at Hook & Anchor.

Magnusen's pedigree became even more evident when I saw the Scottish salmon plate. The presentation was immaculate. The perfectly grilled fish laid carefully atop a base of cilantro-lime rice and sautéed-to-order green beans and carrots, garnished with micro greens and edible flower petals. Had the plate not been made of paper, it would've been fit for a magazine cover shoot. But it was upon tasting the flawless beurre blanc Magnusen spooned over the fish that I realized this place was something better than the fast-casual seafood concept it advertises itself to be. That Magnusen took this extra step when he could've easily gotten away with a California Fish Grill-style garlic butter is not only admirable, but it also behooves us all to give him the chance he deserves, despite that awful location.

HOOK & ANCHOR

3305 Newport Blvd., Ste. E, Newport Beach, (949)423-7169; www.hookandanchor.com. Open Tues.-Sat., 11 a.m.-9 p.m., Sun., 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Dishes, $11-$23. No alcohol.

WHAT THE ALE
» SARAH BENNETT

Experimenting With Homebrews

Any professional brewer will tell you homebrewing is the boot-strap heart of craft beer. Many of Orange County's best breweries (Cismontane, Beachwood, the Bruery) started in their brewmasters' garages, and the Southern California region is rife with historic clubs that date back decades (some even before homebrewing was legal—oops!).

But even in the era of YouTube apprenticeships and online forums, interest in the kind of personalized education and growth that can only come from monthly homebrew club meetings remains strong. And with small systems and big imaginations, making beer at home is as popular as ever. And despite the homebrew scene's (accurate) reputation as being mostly older white men, it's also finally growing to reflect the diversity of craft beer as a whole.

At the members-only Southern California Homebrewers Festival just outside Temecula earlier this month, nearly every active club in the region was tented and represented, pouring members' latest beers from custom-built jockey boxes to hundreds of attendees. (Full disclosure: I moderated a panel on women in beer at the fest.)

There was the Maltose Falcons, the oldest homebrew club in the country, with nearly 30 experimental beers on tap. The Société du Lambic, a wild-beers-only club from San Diego, poured tasters of an impeccable home-made gueuze. Orange County's oldest homebrew club, the Barley Bandits, whose members volunteer at the state association level as well, had about 20 beers on tap, including creative stouts, hazy IPAs and a gluten-free Belgian-style triple.

Most exciting, though, were the tasters from the three newest clubs, all from Los Angeles: Mota Brewing (yes, they make a THC beer), SoCal Cerveceros (all Latinxs!) and the West Adams Society of Homebrewers.

Inspired to brew your own at home? Try O'Shea Brewing in Laguna Niguel, Unrestricted Brewing in Mission Viejo, Windsor Homebrew Supply in Costa Mesa or Phantom Ales in Anaheim to get you started.

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COURTESY OF THE KROFT

Starchy Love

Five great French fries in Orange County

BY ANNE MARIE PANORINGAN

Fries before guys! That's our motto. At least, it is when we're hangry. Get your starchy fix at these tasty places. (Burgers not required.)

The Kroft's Tikka Masala Poutine
All the flavors you love, blanketing a mass of crisp potatoes. Check out them cheese curds! It's hard to think about much else when this is staring back at you. Chicken tikka masala takes this fry pile to the next level. *At the Anaheim Packing District, 440 S. Anaheim Blvd., Anaheim, (714) 635-5900; also at Union Market Tustin, 2493 Park Ave., Ste. 2, Tustin, (714) 259-1132, www.thekroft.com.*

Wingman Kitchen's Buff Chick Loaded Fries
Sriracha buffalo and ranch sauces coat nuggets of chicks. Blue cheese crumbles garnish. No matter how you look at it, these waffle fries blow every other waffler (including your diet) out of the water. If we use enough finesse, we might not even require a fork. *At 4th Street Market, 201 E. Fourth St., Santa Ana, (714) 486-0700, wwwwingman-kitchen.com.*

Sup Noodle Bar's Shaken House Fries
Fried egg or not, this is one hot mess. And we mean that in the best possible way. Shaken short rib never sounded so good... until it was joined by caramelized onions, sharp Cheddar and a spicy tartar. This definitely requires a shot of Fernet Branca afterward. *5141 Beach Blvd., Ste. B, Buena Park, (714) 521-2444, supnoodlebar.com.*

Slapfish's Chowder Fries
Slapfish sustainable seafood. Say that super-swift six times. Two great tastes that taste great together, it's one of the signature dishes that makes this local brand popular enough to expand into other states. We'll take extra bacon on ours! *Various locations, www.slopfishrestaurant com*

The Hat's Pastrami Fries
Topped with enough protein to give you the meat sweats, the Hat doesn't skimp on anything—especially fries. You may see the chili fries and even gravy fries on the menu. However, these are no secret. We can never have enough pastrami in our lives, and neither should you. *1210 E. Imperial Hwy., Brea, (714) 257-9500, also at 23641 Rockfield Blvd., Lake Forest, (949) 586-9200, wwwthehat.com.*

Honorable Mention: The Cut's Poutine
The Cut had us at cilantro chimichurri. Not to mention, it makes a mean burger. *3831 Alton Pkwy., Irvine, (949) 386-8547, www thecuthcb com.*

Decadent Comforts

Don Churro con nieve at Don Churros

GABRIEL SAN ROMAN

A steady crowd of people quickly line up along the red-velour ropes in front of Don Churros from 5:30 to 10 p.m. every Thursday through Sunday. Nestled by a parking lot near George's Best Burgers in Anaheim, the family-owned business delights dessert-lovers with 47-year-old churro recipes from Jalisco, Mexico. And even though the food truck has only been open for a few months, it already delivers the best churros in the county.

The menu is simple. For those seeking familiar comforts, there's *el tradicional*, whose slender, sugary stem crinkles into doughy softness upon first bite. But for an indulgent novelty, order the churro grueso (a.k.a. the "Don Churro") with ice cream.

Unlike *el tradicional*, the Don Churro is a stubby snack coated in brown sugar. The deep-fried dough is sliced in the middle, with a slathering of caramel sauce applied to its entrails, then two scoops of vanilla bean ice cream. The ice cream is slightly sandy in texture, with a sweet splash of vanilla that compliments, not overpowers, the churro's flavor. The confection is best eaten as if it were an ice cream sandwich, but keep a plastic spoon and some napkins handy, as things can get a little messy.

Don Churros boasts it's the only spot in OC to offer the treat, which is popular in the highlands of Yahualica, Jalisco. And it's so good it probably won't be long before Don Churros goes from food truck to brick-and-motor. Just ask San Jose-Anaheim city officials recently sent three boxes of diced, seven-piece roscas enteras to the Northern California city to settle a lost bet between mayors over the NHL playoffs. Even Shark fans can't deny Don Churros' offerings are churrific!

GSANROMAN@OCWEEKLY.COM

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1475 S. Anaheim Blvd., Anaheim,
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EatThisNow

» GABRIEL SAN ROMÁN

DrinkOfTheWeek

» ROBERT FLORES

World Beer Cup Results

COURTESY OF NOBLE ALE WORKS

The results are in for the 2018 World Beer Cup, which took place on May 3 in Nashville. Founded in 1996, the World Beer Cup celebrates the art and science of brewing, and this year, 56 countries participated, entering 8,234 beers in 101 categories.

Among the local winners are:

- Hoparazzi Brewing Co. (Heat of the Night, bronze in Chili Beer)
- Green Cheek Beer Co. (Radiant Beauty, silver in American-style IPA)
- Brewery Rex (Raspberry Rickey, bronze in Berliner-style Weiss)
- Barley Forge Brewing Co. (the Patsy, silver in Field Beer)
- Bruery Terreux (Train to Beersel, gold in Wood & Barrel Aged Sour Beer)
- Noble Ale Works, which took gold in Imperial IPA with Nobility
- Artifex Brewing (HohDAVE, bronze in American-style Imperial Stout)
- Docent Brewing (Double Nickles, silver in American-style Pale Ale).
- Tustin Brewing Co. (Portola Breakfast Stout, gold in Coffee Stout/Porter; Clutches Wheat, bronze in American Wheat)
- Beachwood BBQ and Brewing (Udder Love, silver in Sweet Stout/Cream Stout; Pablo Escobeer, silver in Coffee Beer; Mocha Machine, silver in Coffee Stout or Porter; Hoppa Ementus, bronze in American Black Ale)

Cheers to all our breweries and to everyone behind the kettles and kegs.

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Chekhov, Please

Film adaptation breathes new life into *The Seagull*

BY MATT COKER

How do you breathe new life into a play Anton Chekhov wrote in 1895?

First, you have it adapted by a relatively young but talented writer. Next, you turn the project over to a hungry director. Finally, you assemble a talented cast of veteran actors and acclaimed newcomers.

That strategy was employed for a thoroughly fresh cinematic take on *The Seagull*, which had a couple of screenings at the recent Newport Beach Film Festival and opens Friday and May 25 in Orange County theaters.

The Seagull is considered the first of Chekhov's four great plays, and the Moscow Art Theatre production of 1898 was considered one of the greatest Russian theater achievements.

The latest adaptation was written by Stephen Karam, whose play *The Humans* won the Tony Award for Best Play and was a finalist for the Pulitzer Prize for Drama in 2016. But Karam infuses his *Seagull* with comedy, as he did with his play *Sons of the Prophet*, which was a Pulitzer finalist in 2012, and his screenplay for 2017's *Speech & Debate*, which he adapted from his play and is his only other credit for a feature film that has been produced.

The Seagull opens with part of a scene that will be returned to in the final act. Retired civil servant Sorin (a frail but formidable Brian Dennehy) is on his deathbed in the early 1900s at his country estate, where he is surrounded by family, household workers and a doctor friend. His sister, Moscow stage actress Irina (a self-obsessed Annette Bening), arrives with her lover, the well-known writer Boris Trigorin (a slippery Corey Stoll of *The Strain* and *House of Cards*).

The guests cause fits for Irina's son Konstantin (a lost Billy Howle, *The Witness for the Prosecution*), who views Trigorin as a hack and his mother as unsupportive, even though she helps to bankroll the idyllic lakeside estate where he lives with his admiring uncle.

Cut to the same place a couple of years before. Sorin was in better health then, but it is evident the estate was infected with jealousy and unrequited love. Konstantin pines for Nina (a radiant Saoirse Ronan, the Best Actress Oscar nominee for *Lady Bird*), an aspiring young actress who lives at a neighboring estate. Nina has her eyes on Trigorin, who has joined Irina on a brief vacation at Sorin's estate. Actually, the younger woman seems most taken in by the fame that suddenly surrounds her. You could imagine the Chekhov play informing *All About Eve*.

The Sorin estate manager's daughter Masha (a hilariously Debbie Downer-like Elizabeth Moss) is madly in love with Konstantin, who pays more attention to a gnat. Unbeknownst to Masha, her mother, Polina (a desperate Mare Winningham), is having an affair with the family doctor Dorn (a bemused Jon Tenney, *Major Crimes*), even though she is married to Shamreyev (an explosive Glenn Fleshler, *Barry*, *Billions*), the retired lieutenant who runs the estate. However, Masha is quite aware that she is the object of the affections of schoolteacher Mikhail (*The Marvelous Mrs Maisel*'s Michael Zegen, channeling his inner Woody Allen).

SONY PICTURES

Throw in some suicide attempts, anger, sadism, rejections, humiliations, a bizarre play-within-a-movie-based-on-a-play and one very dead seagull, and you've got the makings of a delicious story filled with characters possessing the ugly emotions and motivations that reside in us all.

Most of the credit for that goes, of course, to Chekhov, who created a play more than a century ago with a power that has not diminished with time. It's thoroughly modern, thanks in no small part to Karam, who previously adapted Chekhov's *The Cherry Orchard* for the stage.

The Seagull also works because the actors, including some who are used to playing leads, dive into ensemble roles and allow themselves to be displayed in most unflattering ways, including narcissism for Bening, delusion for Ronan and drunken broodiness for Moss.

Of course, even the best writing and acting can be undermined by poor direction. With *The Seagull*, Michael Mayer was at the helm of only his third full-length feature, his two previous being 2006's *Flicka* and 2004's *A Home at the End of the World*. But in the years between *Flicka* and *The Seagull*, Mayer directed for television and the stage, picking up Tonys for *Spring Awakening*, *Hedwig and the Angry Inch* and *A View From the Bridge*.

Though Mayer was adapting for the screen a drawing-room play, he paces *The Seagull* brilliantly, cutting out some of Chekhov's chitchat, relying on the actors' eyes, faces and body language to up the tension and humor. With editor Annette Davey (*Dude, Wattress*), Mayer also slices in footage from the great outdoors of Arrow Park Lake & Lodge in Monroe, New York.

As the story nears its end, by first repeating the present of the opening, the audience goes on to learn what happened to each character over the two years that ensued. There are some surprises, as well as a shocking ending, but thanks to solid acting, writing and directing, the payoff rings true.

MCOKER@OCWEEKLY.COM

THE SEAGULL

was directed by Michael Mayer, written by Stephen Karam, based on Anton Chekhov's play, and stars Annette Bening, Saoirse Ronan, Corey Stoll, Elisabeth Moss, Mare Winningham, Jon Tenney, Glenn Fleshler, Bill Howle and Brian Dennehy. Opens Fri. at Edwards Westpark 8 Irvine, and May 25 at Directors Cut Cinema at Rancho Niguel, Laguna Niguel.

ANNETTE BENING · SAOIRSE RONAN · COREY STOLL · ELISABETH MOSS · MARE WINNINGHAM · JON TENNEY · GLENN FLESHLER · MICHAEL ZEGEN · BILLY HOWLE · BRIAN DENNEHY

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-Dana Schwartz, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

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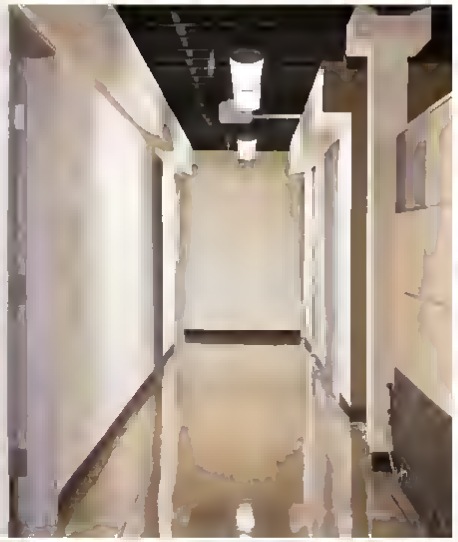

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In the Room Where It Happens

Hurricane-force musical *Hamilton* touches land at Segerstrom

BY JOEL BEERS

What do you write about a play that has been so written about, talked about, dissected, analyzed and been christened as the Big Theatrical Thing? We're talking, of course, about *Hamilton*, the Lin-Manuel Miranda musical that is an international sensation. It entered the American political conversation after Vice President Mike Pence attended a show in New York and was, depending on your persuasion, either lectured or appealed to by the cast from the stage after the show. It has won nearly every award imaginable and is grossing nearly $2 million per week on its sold-out show on Broadway and multiple touring versions.

Well, for starters, the show, which is currently in Orange County as part of its second concurrent national tour, is stupendous. And it's long, clocking in at about 2 hours 45 minutes. There's equal parts American history 101 and genre-shattering musical, with colorblind casting, a hip-hop-inflected score and boisterous enthusiasm. It's both a celebration and castigation of America, revealing the heart of our collective experiment in American democracy while shining a light on some of its darker passages.

The play, really, is a biopic of Alexander Hamilton, one of America's seminal Founding Fathers (and the guy on the $10 bill), a figure who advocated for a strong national government and central bank who long since lost the battle in the court of public opinion to his primary opponent, Thomas Jefferson, but whose writings and intellect did as much to shape the founding of the country and lay its ultimate blueprint as anyone.

The musical touches upon all that, but it also humanizes Hamilton, an immigrant born and raised in the Caribbean, whose mother may have been of mixed race and who was (although this is a matter of intense historical controversy) an outspoken public abolitionist. The conscious decision to cast so many of the roles in hues of color (Hamilton is played by Joseph Morales, whom one surmises is Latino, George Washington is played by Marcus Choi, an Asian, Aaron Burr is played by Nik Walker, an African-American, and Jefferson is played by Kyle Scatliffe, another African-American) elevates the conversation about the perennial thorn that has been in the side of America since before its inception: race. For one of the few times in an incredibly popular piece of commercial entertainment, people of color are mainly telling the story of America's foundation, no longer relegated to the background or depicted as heroic martyrs. (Interestingly, the character who comes off the worst in the play, King George, is played by one of the few white faces among the 38-member cast, Jon Patrick Walker.)

JOAN MARCUS

It's not a perfect show. There's a lack of memorable songs and too much focus on Hamilton's complicated love life. Married to one sister but deeply in love with another, he strays from his wife and is blackmailed, this sub-plot is important for the narrative, as it leads to his opponents (Burr, Jefferson and James Madison) to pretty much ostracize him from the reigning political conversation, but the show lingers too long on it. The love triangle between Hamilton and the two sisters is particularly focused on, and the show's incredible momentum, which is mostly kept through the entire proceedings, does feel hamstrung at times. The play could easily lose those 20 minutes and be even stronger for its absence.

But the cast and production values are top-notch. Anyone who can actually get and afford a ticket (this thing has been sold out for months) or who passes on the assumption that the talent of a nationally touring production must be second-rate and pale in comparison with original productions is simply wrong. Morales' Hamilton and Nik Walker's Burr, who are the Mozart and Salieri of this piece, are particularly impressive, imbuing their characters with complexity and depth while also just being a joy to watch. But there is not a weak link in the entire ensemble. Jon Patrick Walker, Scatliffe and Ferrie L. Philippe (as Madison) do the best they can with their underwritten roles; if there is a weak link in the impressive chain that Miranda created it's the over-the-top bumbling of their characters. These three do supply comic relief, but their characters are not given justice, and nothing in Thomas Kail's staging salvages them.

The play is ultimately about storytelling and the monuments we leave behind, whether they are children, buildings, financial systems or moments of infamy. After Hamilton's fateful duel with Burr, the cast assembles, and Washington reminds the audience that no one gets to choose how they are remembered. And that parallels the oft-cited line that history is written by the victors. The fact that *Hamilton* was written and performed by people who all too often have not been the victors in the American story is one reason this show is so goddamn electrifying, important and memorable.

HAMILTON

at Segerstrom Center for the Arts, 600 Town Center Dr., Costa Mesa, (714) 556-2787; www.scfta.org. Tues.-Fri., 7:30 p.m., Sat., 2 & 7:30 p.m., Sun., 1 p.m. & 6:30 p.m. Through May 27. $80.75-$740.75—but good luck finding a ticket.

ARTSOVERLOAD

» AIMEE MURILLO

May 18-24

"BFA FINE ARTS EXHIBITION"—Laguna College of Art + Design's senior graduate students present thesis works in traditional and digital mediums. Open Wed.-Sun., 11 a.m.-4 p.m. Through May 31. Free. LCAD Gallery, 374 Ocean Ave., Laguna Beach. (949) 376-6000; www.lcad.edu.

ELVIS '68—Back by popular demand, this play imagines Elvis Presley's emotional toll during the taping of his iconic 1968 comeback special. Fri.-Sat., 8 p.m., Sun., 7 p.m. Through June 9. $30. Maverick Theater, 110 E. Walnut Ave., Fullerton. (714) 526-7070; mavericktheater.com.

FRESH (AIR) ARTIST IN RESIDENCE PROGRAM—Artists Timothy Bakhtiy and Jennifer Anderson will live-paint in the gallery and field questions from visitors. Sat.-Sun., noon-5 p.m. Free with gallery admission ($3). City of Brea Art Gallery, 1 Civic Center Circle, Brea. (714) 990-7731. www.breagallery.com.

"IMPRESSIONISM VS. REALISM"—The two styles are juxtaposed in order to compare and contrast the evocative differences and emotional resonance. Open Sun.-Wed., 10:30 a.m.-6 p.m., Thurs.-Sat., 11 a.m.-8 p.m. Through May 31. Free. Las Laguna Art Gallery, 577 S. Coast Hwy. Ste. A-1, Laguna Beach. (949) 667-1803; www.laslagunagallery.com.

"INSIGHTS 2018: ANNUAL SCHOOL OF ART STUDENT EXHIBITION"—Cal State Long Beach's graduate and undergraduate art students present ceramics, metals, photographs, illustrations and works in other mediums. Open Mon.-Thurs., noon-5 p.m. Through May 25. Free. University Art Museum, Cal State Long Beach, 1250 N. Bellflower Blvd., Long Beach. (562) 985-5761. www.csulb.edu/university-art-museum.

"MESSENGER OF DREAMS"—Art exhibition hosting multitalented students of the Santa Ana Unified School District. Open Thurs.-Sun., noon-5 p.m. Through May 20. Free. Orange County Center for Contemporary Art, 117 N. Sycamore, Santa Ana. (714) 667-1517; www.occca.org.

OCC WORLD DANCE CONCERT—Dance, music, traditions and storytelling showcase cultural groups from around the globe. Fri., 8 p.m. $12-$17. Robert B. Moore Theatre, 2701 Fairview Rd., Costa Mesa. (714) 432-5072; www.orangecoastcollege.edu.

RRR ECO ART SHOW—Artwork made from recycled or reused materials raise money for Orange to Ocean, a nonprofit that aims to keep pollution out of rivers, oceans and lakes. Sat., 8 p.m. Donations accepted. Cruisers Pizza, 210 Fifth St., Huntington Beach. (657) 301-2200; www.drainstoocean.org.

"33RD ANNUAL MADE IN CALIFORNIA EXHIBITION"—Work themed around art made in or reflecting creativity within the state. Open Wed.-Sun., noon-5 p.m. Through June 15. $2-$3. City of Brea Art Gallery, 1 Civic Center Circle, Brea. (714) 990-7731. www.breagallery.com.

"YUMMY ART"—The studio celebrates its fifth-annual Open House with a food-themed student art show. Sun., 8 p.m. Free. Studio H Fine Art, 2691 Richter Ave., Ste. 108, Irvine. (949) 430-7020; www.studiohfineart.com.

OC WEEKLY Bulletin

Upcoming Events

OC Night Market - May 18-20
SUMMER IS COMING. Mark yo' calendars and tag yo' friends for the biggest party of the summer with food, games, art, shopping and performances at OC Fair & Event Center!
Fri & Sat 4PM to 12AM Sun 4PM to 11PM

Newport Beach Wine & Food Festival
Hosted by Balboa Bay Resort
The 15th Annual Newport Beach Wine Festival returns Memorial Day Weekend! Enjoy three days of winemaker dinners, tastings, and more!
Tickets at nightout.com

SCRRR's Wine and Wags Fundraiser
Saturday May 19 noon-4pm at Orange Coast Winery
869 W. 16th St. Newport Beach, Ca 92663
orangecoastwinery.com/product/SCGRR-s-Wine—Wags-Fundraiser

Messages

GIA
Gia is a magnificent big boned 5 year old girl who is incredibly smart. This girl needs a job to do! She is very strong and active and requires someone with previous shepherd experience. Gia knows many commands and she is eager to please. She is not good with other dogs or cats, so requires a home where she can be the queen. Gia would thrive in a home that understands the complex nature of the German Shepherd. To learn more about her please visit gsroc.org

Featured This Week

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From Hair to Eternity

Poison outlasts thorny hiccups and promises a 'good time'

BY CLAY MARSHALL

STILL NO ANTIDOTE

COURTESY OF POISON

Thirty years ago next month, the pop-metal quartet Poison—whose guitar-powered party anthems, libidinous lyrics and gender-blurring image personified the "hair metal" subgenre of hard rock that dominated the charts in the late 1980s—rolled into Irvine Meadows Amphitheatre for the second time.

The group initially played the venue the previous year during their first national tour, when they supported fellow Sunset Strip rockers Ratt, but according to drummer Rikki Rockett, their return to Irvine—a show that saw them open for former Van Halen front man David Lee Roth in support of their just-released second album, *Open Up and Say...Ahh!*—was a turning point for the self-described "glam, slam kings of noise."

"We had been talking about headlining, but we weren't quite ready yet," Rockett recalls. "When we were out with David Lee Roth, I was constantly thinking, 'Oh, my God, what am I going to do when we actually headline, and we have to entertain and keep this energy up for a longer period of time? Can we do it?' A lot of those thoughts were going through my mind when we played Irvine because that was the audience that we had built in Southern California, and it was sitting right in front of us that night."

Three years later, at the peak of their commercial success, Poison—who by then had released a third chart-topping album, *Flesh & Blood*, and scored a No. 1 hit with gold-standard power ballad "Every Rose Has Its Thorn"—returned to Irvine Meadows as a headliner. Their performance that night was simulcast on KLOS, and four songs were filmed for broadcast on ABC's late-night series *In Concert*. Portions also appear on the group's first live album, *Swallow This Live*.

In his review of the show, *Los Angeles Times* critic Mike Boehm grudgingly praised the band's "simple, energetic, dumb-fun hard-rock fare," but he also wrote that "if [ABC's] producers are smart, they will edit out Poison's main deficiencies—flaccid anthem-ballads and the world's worst guitar solos—and keep what the band does best: simple, hormonal raunch & roll."

In the 27 years since, Poison haven't turned many critics into fans, but unlike most of their peers—the majority of which now feature lineups with few original members or, worse, compete against themselves (see Great White and Jack Russell's Great White)—the group's iconic lineup of Rockett, guitarist C.C. DeVille, bassist Bobby Dall and vocalist Bret Michaels remains intact.

More important, while other '80s rock veterans are forced to pound the stage inside dingy dive bars and smoky casinos or, if they're lucky, on the occasional cruise ship, Poison have over the years managed to maintain a firm grip on the lucrative "summer shed" circuit, on which they play before tens of thousands of fans at expansive outdoor venues such as Irvine Meadows and its successor, FivePoint Amphitheatre, where they will headline on Friday.

According to Rockett (née Richard Allan Ream), Poison's longevity can be attributed to their consistency. "When we started, our idea was to create a band that we would like to go see as fans of rock & roll," he says. "We didn't decide to do this kind of music and have this kind of band because we thought it'd be popular. It really wasn't popular in 1982, new wave was where it was at. We wanted to create a band that we would want to go see, that we would want to buy into, so we thought about all of it—the songs, the attitude, how we would look, what we would do onstage. The nucleus of that has never changed."

Still, the band have weathered their fair share of storms over the years. A few months after their 1991 show at Irvine Meadows, DeVille and Michaels got into a fistfight following a disastrous live performance at MTV's Video Music Awards, after which DeVille left the band for eight years. The group also floundered in the wake of grunge, when record sales of rock acts who weren't from Seattle shrunk dramatically. By the time the group recorded their fifth album, *Crack a Smile*, in 1995, their record label didn't even want to release it. (It eventually surfaced in 2000, after Poison reunited with DeVille for a successful tour.)

During an Atlanta show in 2006, meanwhile, Dall and Michaels fought onstage, allegedly over the group's set list. Since then, Poison have settled their differences privately—perhaps, Rockett jokes, because he has a black belt in Brazilian jiu-jitsu ("Nobody wants to fight me!"), but also perhaps because the band know the stakes. "Nothing good is going to come out of a fight," Rockett, 56, says. "If we got in a fight now the way we did back when we were 25 years old, we would just never play together [again]. We all know that. We'd go crawl in our corner, and that would be it—we wouldn't talk to one another, and that would be the end of Poison. We know that's not a good option."

Rockett—an avid motorcyclist, frequent video blogger and father of two—admits that he, DeVille and Dall have harbored some resentment toward Michaels, whose frequent tours as a solo artist led Poison to take a hiatus between 2012 and 2017. "I think we need to get away from one another and do other things, but at the same time, I think he spent a little too much time away," Rockett says. "There's definitely some resentment, but not resentment like I want him to fail. I want him to do good. I just want Poison to be important, too, and I would like [him] to put a little more energy into Poison."

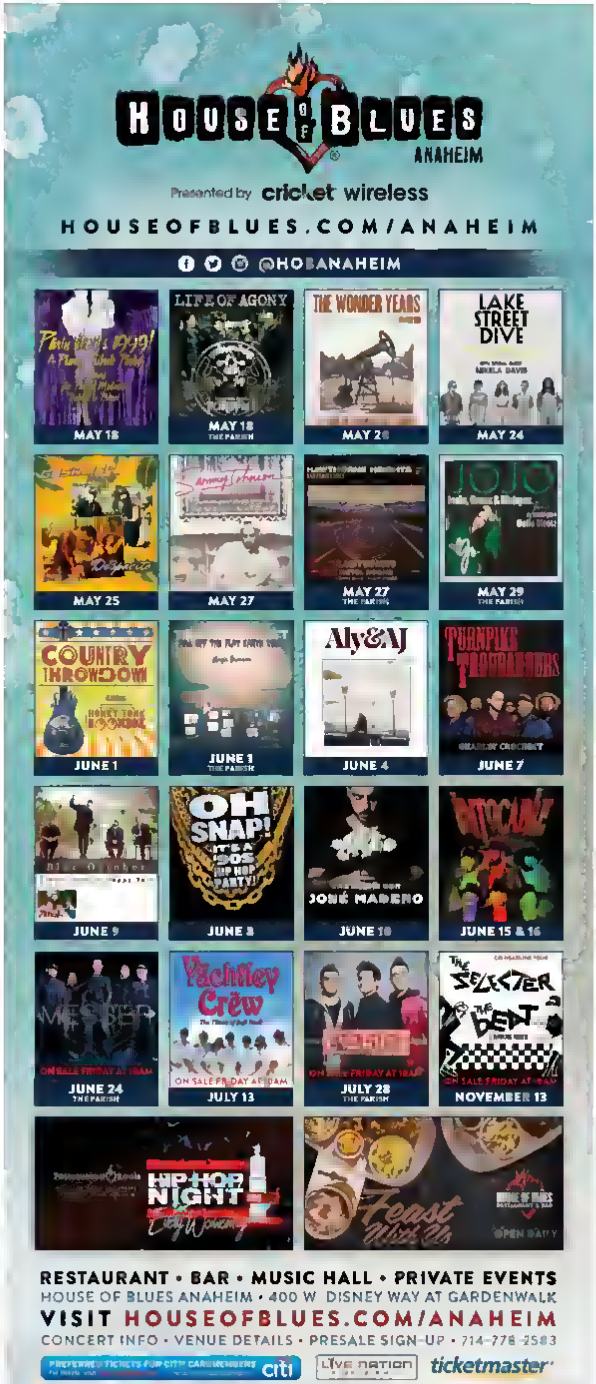
To that end, Rockett says, he'd like the group to record new music in the near future, which would mark their first time in the studio together since they recorded nine cover songs for 2007's *Poison'd!* The band have not released any original music since 2002's *Hollyweird*. "I personally think we still have a lot of stories to tell," Rockett says. "Because the music business has changed so much, I don't know that you'd get a full record out of Poison, but I do believe that you will see new music at some point in some capacity."

New Poison songs are unlikely to replicate the attitude and innocence of early material such as "I Want Action" and "Talk Dirty to Me," their first MTV hits. "We're not that age anymore; we're not in that same place anymore in life," Rockett says. "But I think where we're at is just as interesting, honestly."

But Rockett promises Poison's fans will continue to have nothin' but a good time at the group's concerts this summer, which also feature recent Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inductees Cheap Trick. "If you're a rock fan who wants to see this kind of high-energy, booty, fun [music], we're still your band," he says. "We've never let that go. It's not like we changed, and all of a sudden, we decided we wanted to be U2 and be political or save the world. We're more interested in saving rock & roll, really. I think that's why we've survived—we never gave up the core of who we are."

POISON

perform with Cheap Trick at FivePoint Amphitheatre, 14800 Chinon Ave., Irvine; www.fivepointamphitheatre.com. Fri., 8 p.m. $35-$135. All ages.



Marty's Gets a Makeover

A Tustin dive bar transforms into a destination for live music

BY CJ SIMONSON

As I walk into Marty's Bar and Grill on a Sunday evening, the night air in Tustin is decidedly stale. My arrival prompts the only two men in the bar to wrap up their conversation and leave, as though their secret watering hole had been discovered by an outsider.

I order a rum and coke and wait. Five minutes goes by, then 10, with no activity. Cole, the lone bartender, has retreated into the back, not to be heard from.

Later, I learn that it's the last night Marty's Bar and Grill will be open, at least under its current name. In early April, it was announced that the local dive, known for offering cheap drinks and karaoke six nights a week, was turning into Marty's On Newport, a new music venue to feature punk legends such as X, Wu-Tang legend GZA, and up-and-coming indie artists such as Timber Timbre. Cole tells me that at midnight, he will shut the bar down, and the liquor license will flip, thus abruptly ushering the tavern into a new era.

Cole's disposition seems conflicted. He explains that while locals feel a sense of loss, the day-to-day changes are unclear and that he and the staff are excited. All of them will be kept on to serve when Marty's On Newport officially opens May 23 with a performance by San Francisco synth-pop act Geographer.

The bar won't look too different when it reopens. "The changes we're making are mostly decorative," explains the venue's co-owner, Mike Rouse. "There's a sound system and all that other stuff, but we love that horseshoe bar." A veteran in the OC music scene, Rouse is the former general manager of Santa Ana venue the Observatory, whose longtime talent buyer, Jeff Shuman, is also Rouse's partner in the new venture.

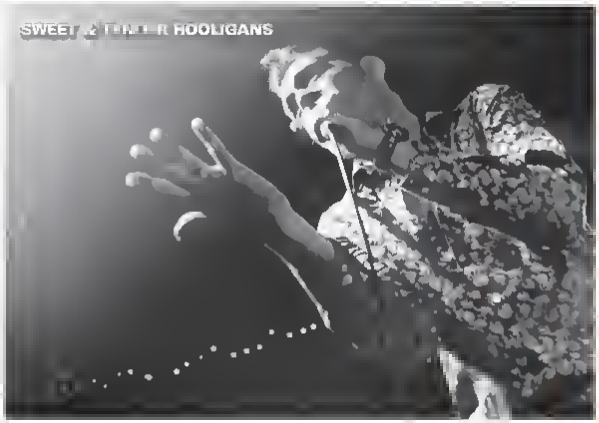
With a capacity of around 150 people, Marty's On Newport will offer an exciting opportunity to see acts of all kinds in a low-key, cozy setting. "It's an intimate entertainment venue that will feature touring, top-quality acts whose fans want to get that intimate experience they're not really allowed at the bigger box rooms," Rouse says excitedly. "It's how the business model has turned. It was 1,000-cap rooms, then it was 500-cap rooms, and now it's down to 200."

CJ SIMONSON

Looking around, it's certainly not hard to imagine how Marty's was a perfect option to become an elite music venue. "We spent two years looking for the right property," says Rouse. "Marty's had a physicality to it that other bars didn't." While its placement next to a dentist's office and behind a gas station make it a relatively unassuming place for classic acts such as Wanda Jackson or Warren G to play, the interior is open with a stage that has seen its fair share of local bar bands and drunken karaoke appearances. "There are no sightline problems, there are front and back-of-house entrances, and there's a stage door that allows the performers to have a walk on that doesn't take away from the mystique."

The venue's current slate of artists is impressive (Rouse is also the manager for X, who are scheduled to play two nights at the venue in August), and while it's unclear how things will change once major touring rock acts begin appearing, there's hope the venue's established local flavor won't go away. "I went to El Modena High School, and I grew up right around the corner from Marty's," explains Rouse. "I come at this from being a band member, being a fan and from being a bar promoter. But I think I come at this from a better informed place than being just a business owner."

MARTY'S ON NEWPORT
14401 Newport Ave., Tustin, (714) 544-1995, www.martysonnewport.com



COURTESY OF SWEET & TENDER HOOLIGANS

Friday

THE GDDD FDDT 8 p.m., $5-10, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com.

RIM AND THE CREATED, THE FLYTRAPS, THE SIDE EYES, SLUT ISLAND 8 p.m., $8, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

PARTY LIKE IT'S 1999: A PRINCE TRIBUTE PARTY 7 p.m., $15, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583; www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

THE WAILING SOULS, SCRAPYARD ACES 7 p.m., $20, 21+. Tiki Bar, 1700 Placentia, Costa Mesa. (949) 270-6762; tikibarnc.com.

Saturday

FARTBARF, ROBBY BLUNDERS, A BAND APARTE, ASI FUI 8 p.m., $10, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com.

THE LIGHTHOUSE AND THE WHALER; VITA AND THE WOOLF; WETWOOD SMOKES 8 p.m., $8-$10, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

MIDNIGHT, RAT, WORMWITCH 8 p.m., $12, all ages. The Constellation Room, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com.

SCHOOL OF ROCK TUSTIN 10 a.m., $7, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583; www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

Sunday

CHRIS TRAVIS, IDONTKNOWJEFFREY 8 p.m., $10, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com.

HOLLYN 7 p.m., $12, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583; www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

HURRY UP: THE ALLEY CATS, RATS IN THE LOUVRE, CLUB FANTASY 8 p.m., $7, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com.

MOTOGRATER 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Slidebar Rock N Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton. (714) 871-7469; www.slidebarfullerton.com.

Monday

AGAINST ME!, CHRIS FANREN, SHARP SHDCK. 7:30 p.m., $25, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com.

THE BRIEFS; THE GEARS; SHATTERED FAITH; GRDSS POLLUTER 8 p.m., $14-$16, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com.

THE JETTIES 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

Tuesday

THE BRIEFS 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Slidebar Rock N Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton. (714) 871-7469; www.slidebarfullerton.com.

CELEBRATING MORRISSEY'S 59TH UNHAPPY BIRTHDAY, WITH SWEET & TENDER HOOLIGANS 7 p.m., $18, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583; www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

TREVOR HALL, MIKE LOVE 7:45, $26, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com.

Wednesday

THE HEAD AND THE HEART, GROUPLOVE, MT. JOY 8 p.m., $45, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com.

HEAVY NIGHTS—BLEEDING THROUGH LISTENING PARTY 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Slidebar Rock N Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton. (714) 871-7469; www.slidebarfullerton.com.

NAKED WALRUS, REACHWOOD COYOTES 8 p.m., $5, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

Thursday, May 24

BIG BUSINESS, INTRCPTR, CRATE DIGGER 8 p.m., $10-$12, 21+. Alex's Bar, 2913 E. Anaheim St., Long Beach. (562) 434-8292; www.alexsbar.com.

GODSPEED YOU! BLACK EMPEROR 8 p.m., $30, all ages. The Observatory, 3503 S. Harbor Blvd., Santa Ana. (714) 957-0600; www.observatoryoc.com.

HEADPHONE MUSIC NIGHT, WITH C-GAK, CHAPIS, METCHKA 8 p.m., $5, 21+. The Prospector, 2400 E. Seventh St., Long Beach. (562) 438-3639; www.prospectrdinghbeach.com.

LITRDNIX, ALRIGHT SPIDER, BURNIN GRDDVE 8 p.m., $5, 21+. The Wayfarer, 843 W. 19th St., Costa Mesa. (949) 764-0039; www.wayfarercm.com.

LAKE STREET DIVE 7 p.m., $36.75, all ages. House of Blues at Anaheim GardenWalk, 400 W. Disney Way, Anaheim. (714) 778-2583; www.houseofblues.com/anaheim.

LAW, TUNNEL VISION, HOORAY FOR OURSIDE, HBH 8 p.m., free, 21+. The Slidebar Rock N Roll Kitchen, 122 E. Commonwealth Ave., Fullerton. (714) 871-7469; www.slidebarfullerton.com.

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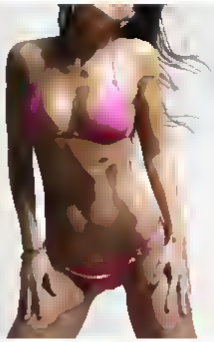

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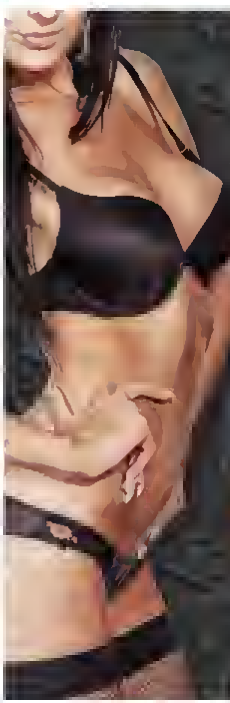

Oriental Theater

SavageLove
» DAN SAVAGE

Savage Love Live at Denver's Oriental Theater last week was epic. I fielded sex questions in front of a sold-out crowd, singer/songwriter Rachel Lark performed amazing songs, comedian Elise Kems absolutely killed it, and Tye—a token straight guy plucked at random from the audience—joined us onstage and gave some pretty great sex advice! We couldn't get to all the audience questions during the show, so I'm going to race through as many unanswered questions as I can in this week's column.

You've famously said, "Oral comes standard." How long before anal comes standard?

How does a week from next Tuesday grab you?

I enjoyed a great sex life with many kinky adventures until my husband died suddenly two years ago. I have insurance $$$ and a house to sell and a dream of using the proceeds to become a sex-positive therapist. Crazy idea? Or something the world needs more of?

Judging by how many people tell me they're having a hard time finding sex-positive, kink-positive, non-positive and poly positive therapists, I would definitely file "sex positive therapist" under "world needs more of." Chase that dream!

How do you introduce your inexperienced-but-willing-to-try partner to BDSM?

By starting a two-person book club. Order *Playing Well With Others: Your Field Guide to Discovering, Exploring, and Navigating the Kink, Leather, and BDSM Communities* by Lea Harrington and Mollena Williams; *The Ultimate Guide to Kink: BDSM, Role Play, and the Erotic Edge* edited by Tristan Taormino; and *SM 101: A Realistic Introduction* by Jay Wiseman. Read and discuss, then discuss some more—and when you're ready to start playing, take it slow!

What resources are available—which do you recommend—to share with my male partner so he can improve (learn) oral sex? (Girl anal sex!)

Two more book recommendations: *The Ultimate Guide to Cunnilingus: How to Go Down on a Woman and Give Her Exquisite Pleasure* by Violet Blue and *She Comes First: The Thinking Man's Guide to Pleasuring a Woman* by Ian Kerner.

My boyfriend told me that women orgasm only 60 percent of the time compared to men. I said I want orgasm equity. How do I navigate hot pansy-assed male ego to find a solution?

The orgasm gap—61 percent of men reported climaxing in their last opposite-sex sexual encounter compared to 54 percent of women (National Survey of Sexual Health and Behavior)—doesn't exist for lesbians and for women in same-sex relationships. So the problem isn't women and their elusive orgasms; it's men and their lazy-ass bullshit. A contributing factor is that women often have a hard time advocating for their own pleasure because they've been socialized to defer to men. There's evidence of that in your question. You want to navigate the problem—the problem being a selfish boyfriend who doesn't care enough about you to prioritize your pleasure and has taken cover behind the orgasm gap—but you want to spare his ego in the process. Fuck his precious ego. Tell him what you want and show him what it takes to get you off. If he refuses to do his part to close the orgasm gap in your apartment, show him the door.

How do you prioritize sex with your partner when life gets so busy and masturbation is so much easier? My fiancé is down for quickies sometimes but not always.

Forgive my tautology, but you prioritize sex by prioritizing sex. Scheduled sex can be awesome sex—and when you're truly pressed for time, you can always masturbate together.

How do I come out to my family as a stripper? I've been dancing for more than two years and don't plan to stop. Some of my family members are biased against sex workers, but I'm tired of keeping up the façade (I told them I'm a bartender).

It's a catch-22: People are afraid to come out to their closed-minded families as queer or poly or sex workers or atheists, but closed-minded families typically don't open their minds until after their queer or poly or sex working or nonbelieving kids come out to them. To open their minds, you'll have to risk blowing them first. Tell them your truth and stand your ground.

I keep having sex dreams about Kanye West. What does that mean?

You're Mike Pence.

Am I doing society a disservice by dating an international drug dealer?

A sexually frustrated international drug dealer is arguably more dangerous than a sexually satisfied international drug dealer—so you may be doing society a service.

Can I want to be monogamous without any reasoning? My boyfriend would probably be in an open relationship, but I'm not interested for no reason in particular.

Speaking with a low-information voter is frustrating because they can't tell you why they voted for someone; speaking with a low-information fucker—someone who can't tell you why they're doing/screwing what they're doing/screwing—is just as frustrating. It's even more frustrating when the low-information/low-self-awareness fucker happens to be the person you're fucking. It's fine to want what you want—*because of course it is*—but unless you're interested only in solo sex, you need to be able to share your reasons.

I dated a guy who said he was in an open relationship. We started working together on a podcast. I got irritated because after two months, he never did any preliminary research. When I pointed that out, he deleted off our work and blocked me on FB. Now he's asking for some stuff he left at my place. Do I give it back?

Yep. As tempting as it might be to hold on to his stuff or trash it, that just keeps the drama alive. If you keep his stuff, he'll keep after you for it. If you trash his stuff, you'll have to worry about the situation escalating. If you want him out of your life and out of your head, put his crap in a bag, set it on your porch or leave it with a neutral third party, and tell him when he can swing by and get it.

How clean should a bottom be? A little bit of shit is kinda expected, isn't it? I mean, you're fucking an ass, right?

My expectations for sterling silver crystal stemware and fuckable ass are the same: I want it *sparkling*.

Zooming out: One doesn't have anal sex with an ass full of shit for the same reason one doesn't have oral sex with a mouth full of food—it's going to make a mess. Making sure your mouth is empty is easy, of course, but it's not that difficult to empty or clean out an ass. Also, a good, fibrous diet empties and cleans out the ass naturally. Yes, you are fucking an ass, that's true, and shit sometimes happens. The top shouldn't poop-shame the bottom when it does happen, and the bottom doesn't need to have a meltdown. It just means you need to pivot to some other sexual activity—after a quick cleanup restores the sparkle.

On the Lovecast (savagelovecast.com): A study of lethal asphyxiation. Spoiler: Don't do it. Contact Dan via mail@savagelove.net, follow him @fakedansavage, and visit ITMFA.org.

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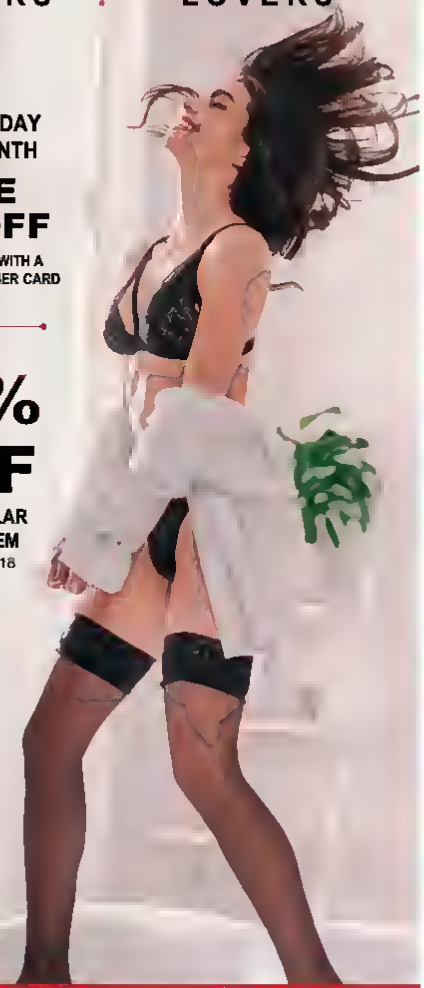

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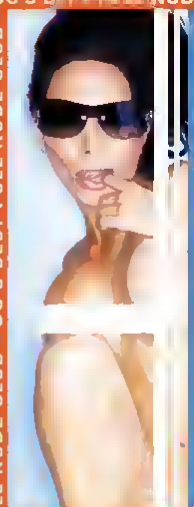

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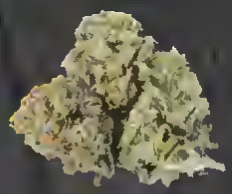

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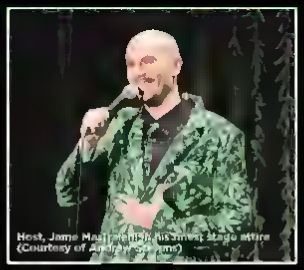

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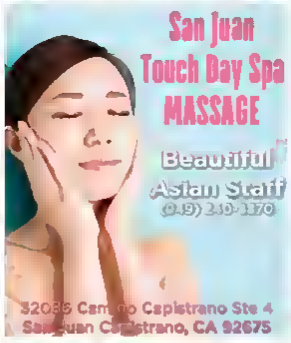
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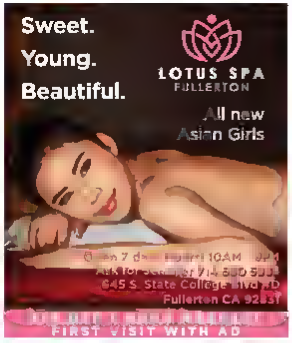
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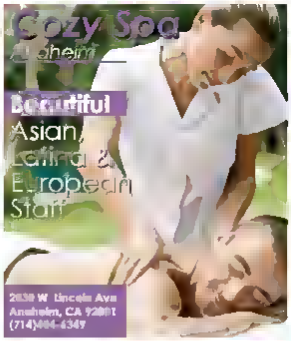
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Year of the Woman?

Not when it comes to Orange County's congressional races

BY MATT COKER

With less than a month to go before the June 5 primary election, "The Year of the Woman" in Orange County congressional races is sputtering.

There are 15 females on ballots for five of the seven Orange County congressional district elections. Two of these candidates are incumbents, one of whom appears to have a lock on eventually being re-elected and another who is being heavily targeted by the opposition party but will probably reach the November general election.

Of the 13 remaining women on the ballot, two have withdrawn and the other 11 have tough fights ahead to advance past June. Many of these same females, energized by the #MeToo movement, the 2017 Women's March and a philandering groper in the White House, announced their candidacies to great fanfare. Some are in Orange County congressional districts that Hillary Clinton had won.

But the only female candidate to win her local Democratic Party's endorsement is 38th district incumbent Linda Sánchez (D-Lakewood), who is barely considered part of the Orange County delegation as La Palma is the only non-Los Angeles County territory she represents. Sanchez, the sister of history-making former Representative Loretta Sanchez (D-Garden Grove), only faces one opponent in June: Republican Ryan Downing, who was crushed by the incumbent in November 2016.

Two female Democrats are on the ballot for the 39th congressional district that includes Fullerton, La Habra, Brea, Buena Park, Anaheim Hills, Placentia, Yorba Linda and parts of Los Angeles and San Bernardino counties: Dr. Mai Khanh Tran and Suzi Park Leggett.

Emily's List, the powerful political-action committee that helps to elect pro-choice Democratic female candidates to office, came out early in support of Fountain Valley pediatrician Tran, who is also endorsed by the Feminist Majority Foundation. Her campaign got another jolt when the 39th's incumbent, Ed Royce, announced his retirement after having served in Congress since 1993.

Tran did not get the endorsements of the California and Orange County Democratic parties, but neither did anyone else in that race. But the Democratic Congressional Campaign Committee (DCCC), the PAC that raises donations nationally for local elections, recently asked Tran to end her campaign because the DCCC Red to Blue program had endorsed the deep-pocketed Gil Cisneros.

In a recent fundraising email, Tran explained her answer to the DCCC: "I told them, 'How can you ask me, the only capable, qualified candidate who has been running for 10 months, who has outraised everybody, to withdraw? All so you can support a former Republican?'"

The National Republican Congressional Committee split the baby (and the sexes) in the 39th, labeling as "Hot Contenders" Orange County Supervisor Shawn Nelson and Royce protegé Young Kim, who served one term as a state assemblywoman. Sophia Alexander, an American Independent, and Karen Lee Schatzle, who has no party preference, are also candidates.

Mimi Walters (R-Irvine) is the incumbent in the 45th congressional district, which covers Irvine, Tustin, Villa Park, Orange, Anaheim Hills, Laguna Hills, Lake Forest, Rancho Santa Margarita, Mission Viejo, and parts of Aliso Viejo and Laguna Niguel.

Democrats are trying to switch the 45th from red to blue because Clinton carried it in November 2016. Walters has a formidable Democratic opponent in Katie Porter, a UC Irvine law professor and protégé of Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-Massachusetts), who also has been endorsed by Emily's List. But Porter's party is backing another UCI Law professor, Dave Min, a former aide to Senator Chuck Schumer (D-New York).

Every candidate has a penis in the 46th (Anaheim, Santa Ana and parts of Orange) and the 47th (Garden Grove, Westminster, Stanton, Los Alamitos, Cypress, Long Beach and Catalina Island), including incumbents Lou Correa (D-Anaheim) and Alan Lowenthal (D-Long Beach), both of whom the Democratic Party endorsed.

The 48th makes up for that slight with the names of four women on the ballot. Republican Shastina Sandman and Democrats Laura Oatman, Rachel Payne and Deanie Schaarsmith. However, Oatman and Payne have withdrawn, citing the possibility that with so many candidates in the race, Democrats could cancel one another out and lead to an all-Republican November run-off. Under California's "jungle primary" system, the top two vote-getters move on to the general election, regardless of party affiliation.

That's a real possibility, as the 48th's incumbent, Dana Rohrabacher (R-Huntington Beach), has led in the polls, followed by fellow Republican Scott Baugh and Democrats Harley Rouda, Omar Siddiqui and Hans Keirstead, who is endorsed by his state and local party.

The 49th district, which is open thanks to the retirement of Darrell Issa (R-Vista), covers Dana Point, San Clemente, Camp Pendleton and mostly northern San Diego County communities. It's another red-to-blue project because Issa barely beat Democrat Doug Applegate in 2016.

Applegate is among four Democrats running this time. Another is Sara Jacobs, who is the granddaughter of Qualcomm's billionaire co-founder. She was in dead last in a recent poll that also showed Applegate losing support while the two other Democrats, Paul Kerr and Mike Levin, picked up some.

Leading the poll was state Assemblyman Rocky Chávez (R-Oceanside), who joins eight other Republicans on the ballot, including two women, former Assemblywoman Diane Harkey (R-Dana Point) and Kristin Gaspar, who chairs the San Diego County Board of Supervisors.

There is another woman in the race: the Green Party's Danielle St. John.

COURTESY DR. MAI KHANH TRAN FOR CONGRESS

IT'S NOT THE MESSAGE, IT'S THE MESSENGERS

The Orange County Business Council (OCBC) and Southern California Association of Governments (SCAG) recently teamed up for a white paper titled "Retail Land Use in Orange County: An Examination of Future Potential." It suggests that shopping centers filled with empty stores that have closed because of competition from online retail can be repurposed as housing developments.

"As e-commerce takes over the economy, we need to look forward, not back," says Hasan Ikhrata, SCAG's executive director. "Instead of waiting for brick-and-mortar retail to make a comeback, we need to see how else we can utilize land to meet our changing needs."

Adds Wallace Walrod, the white paper's co-author and the OCBC's chief economic adviser, "Segments of Orange County's retail sector have only partially returned to their pre-recession peaks. That reality, however, creates transformational opportunities for reinvestment and reuse. The region is presented with a very rare opportunity to rethink conventional wisdom about retail land use and consider ways to meet other needs through adaptive reuse."

None of that rings false to me, although I do wonder where these future residents are supposed to work given the loss of retail. Then there is this: The OCBC and SCAG previously teamed up to present research that showed "Orange County would lose the opportunity for 68,000 jobs, $7 billion in economic activity, and $450 million in annual state and local government tax revenues from a profitable commercial airport operation at El Toro."

Of course, voters rose up and rejected the building of a 24-hour, international airport at the former El Toro Marine Corps Air Station. It's now the site of the Orange County Great Park.

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